

# **GETTING AHEAD OF THE NEED: COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELING FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

**YEAR ONE EVALUATION REPORT, 2001-2002**



**AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
OFFICE OF PROGRAM EVALUATION  
MARCH 2003**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Getting Ahead of the Need: Comprehensive Counseling for Elementary Schools* grant was awarded to Austin Independent School District (AISD) by the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program through the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education for a period of three years, beginning June 2001. The primary goal of the grant is to create an environment that is more conducive to learning by improving elementary school counseling prevention and intervention services offered in AISD. This goal is being met through further development and full implementation of AISD's *Live This!* guidance and counseling curriculum at fourteen high-need campuses. In order to understand and quantify progress toward this goal, three project objectives have been established:

- Increase the number of students receiving preventative guidance and counseling services;
- Decrease the need for crisis intervention; and
- Create an environment conducive to learning through increased perceptions of safety on campuses.

In this first year of a three-year grant, the primary means by which these objectives were supported was through the provision of six additional counselors to 12 of the 14 targeted elementary campuses. Each counselor split time between 2 of the target campuses. There were initial delays in implementing the grant, including leadership changes and difficulty hiring qualified staff. However, once underway, the addition of a part-time counselor enabled counselors at target schools to deliver, on average, direct guidance services to six times the number of students provided services by counselors at comparison schools. In order to continue making progress on the grant goals, focus must shift from first-year concerns, such as hiring and training staff, to full implementation of the guidance program at the grant schools. Following are several specific steps to accomplish this objective:

- Focus on meeting all student needs and reaching as many students as possible by providing preventative services (e.g., classroom guidance) to the greatest number of students, intermediate level responsive services (e.g., groups) to

fewer students, and intensive (i.e., individual) services to only those students with the greatest needs;

- Further develop the Live This! curriculum. For example, explore and adopt more targeted tools for teaching each curriculum strand, better link curriculum objectives and student competencies, and align Guidance and Counseling curriculum with academic curriculum;
- Increase “long-term” improvements in student behavior by providing teachers with the tools and skills to reinforce guidance lessons in their own classrooms;
- Provide supplemental staff training to support grant program goals, as planned.

The current environment of high stakes testing creates an urgent need to develop skills identified as essential to academic success for children. Preliminary evidence suggests that student exposure to preventative guidance and counseling services could help set the stage for academic success and that this is a promising area in which AISD can accomplish the goal of “teaching the whole child.” Increased counseling staff and prioritization of counselors’ duties, to focus on their area of specialty, rather than administrative tasks, are means of accomplishing this goal. Evaluation of this grant in the upcoming two years will include targeted investigation of the links between exposure to guidance and counseling services, student skills, and student academic achievement.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	i
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	iv
PROJECT OVERVIEW AND STATUS.....	1
Overview .....	1
Project Implementation .....	1
EVALUATION OF PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.....	4
Objective 1: Increase number of students receiving preventive guidance & counseling services.....	4
Objective 2: Decrease need for crisis intervention .....	8
Objective 3: Increase staff and student perceptions of safety, creating an environment conducive to learning. ....	12
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	14
Recommendations .....	14
APPENDIX A: TITLE IV ADVISORY COUNCIL ELEMENTARY GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SUBCOMMITTEE .....	16
APPENDIX B: GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING TIME ACCOUNTING LOGS.....	17
APPENDIX C: 2002 LIVE THIS! STUDENT EVALUATION FORM.....	21
APPENDIX D: ELEMENTARY TEACHER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM SURVEY ...	24
APPENDIX E: STUDENT FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS.....	27

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1: Relative Use of Counselor Time Across Service Categories by Type of Counselor and Category of School, 2001-2002 .....	5
Figure 2: Percentage of Time Spent in Curriculum Strands by Type of Counselor and School, 2001-2002 .....	7
Figure 3: Mean Student Competence on Responsible Behavior at Target and Comparison Schools, 2001-2002.....	11
Figure 4: Mean Student Competence on Conflict Resolution at Target and Comparison Schools, 2001-2002.....	11
Figure 5: Teacher Perceptions of Guidance Lesson Effectiveness, 2001-2002.....	12
Figure 6: Teacher Perceptions of Changes in Student Behavior Following Guidance Lessons, 2001-2002 .....	13

**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Classroom Guidance Lesson Delivery by Type of Counselor and School, 2001-2002.....	6
Table 2: Student Exposure to Counseling by Type of Counselor and School, 2001-2002....	6
Table 3: Teacher Reported Frequency and Topics of Classroom Guidance Lessons in Target and Comparison Elementary Schools, 2001-2002 .....	8
Table 4: Discipline Offenses and Dill School Referrals by School, 2001-2002.....	9
Table 5: Average Number of Individual Teacher Referrals to Guidance and Counseling Services, 2001-2001 .....	10

## **PROJECT OVERVIEW AND STATUS**

### **OVERVIEW**

The *Getting Ahead of the Need: Comprehensive Counseling for Elementary Schools* grant was awarded to Austin Independent School District (AISD) by the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program through the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education for a period of three years, beginning June 2001. The primary goal of the grant is to create an environment that is more conducive to learning by improving elementary school counseling prevention and intervention services offered in AISD. This goal is being met through further development and full implementation of AISD's *Live This!* guidance and counseling curriculum at fourteen high-need campuses. In order to understand and quantify progress toward this goal, three project objectives have been established:

- Increase the number of students receiving preventative guidance and counseling services;
- Decrease the need for crisis intervention; and
- Create an environment conducive to learning through increased perceptions of safety on campuses.

The means by which this grant is supporting these objectives is through provision of funding to seven additional counselors who will each work with two high-need elementary campuses, and through training provided to all AISD elementary school counselors. It is expected that student outcomes at the 14 target schools will demonstrate the value of maximizing direct services to students, parents, and teachers and of minimizing administrative and other “non-guidance” tasks (e.g., testing and scheduling). In addition, training all elementary counselors will contribute to the quality of services district-wide.

### **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **Hiring and Training Project Staff**

Several challenges encountered in meeting the year-one grant objectives were related to initial staffing difficulties. At the outset, staff turnover at AISD in the summer and fall of 2001 lead to multiple changes in project management in a very short time. This

lack of continuity and guidance caused implementation to be delayed. Once staffing in the leadership position was settled, additional challenges were encountered associated with hiring grant counselors, which resulted in a staggered start across the target schools. The two primary obstacles associated with hiring grant counselors were: availability of qualified personnel and budget restrictions. First, there was a shortage of eligible counselors, especially bilingual counselors, applying for the positions. Second, the salary requirements of those meeting the qualifications were greater than budgeted, i.e., because of their level of experience and a districtwide salary increase that took place after the original grant was written, district hiring policies mandated that they be hired at a higher salary than the grant provided.

However, despite leadership turnover and initial delays in hiring counseling staff, significant progress was made toward completing the training goals for year one. By the end of the school year, six of the seven counselors had been hired and began serving twelve of the fourteen intended target schools. All grant counselors attended monthly district training sessions for new-counselors and districtwide counselor professional development sessions. Dependant on their hire date, several of these counselors completed training focused on the two emphasized guidance curriculum strands, Responsible Behavior and Conflict Management. In addition, several grant counselors attended one or more of the following violence prevention curriculum training sessions and began implementing these programs on their campuses:

- Protecting You, Protecting Me
- Let's Get Real About Violence
- Peer Assistance and Leadership

Further districtwide training for all elementary counselors is scheduled to take place in the 2002-2003 school year.

### **Year One Accomplishments**

In addition to hiring and training six grant counselors, five meetings with grant counselors were conducted to address program implementation, evaluation, counselor concerns, and to review guidance curriculum. Collaboration with the Title IV Advisory Council was also established and a subcommittee was formed to focus on elementary counseling (Appendix A). In addition, another subcommittee of the Advisory Council is working to create a database to document all outside agencies (e.g., mental health

agencies) providing services on each campus, which will be utilized by the Guidance and Counseling department to maximize efficient delivery of services on elementary and secondary campuses. This database will be particularly useful to counselors and IMPACT teams in identifying and locating appropriate community resources for student referrals. A guidance and counseling brochure for parents is being developed with an anticipated spring release. Finally, baseline data including counselor time and task analysis, teacher surveys, student evaluations, and student opinions regarding perceptions of safety was collected and is presented below.

**Budget Information**

Actual expenditures through March 30, 2002 were less than half of the original budgeted amount (\$168,531.30, 46% of \$367,875). This was a result of changes in project leadership during the first half of this budget period, difficulty in hiring counseling staff once the school year began, and subsequent changes in scheduling for training, video production, and brochure printing. Remaining funds were rolled forward for remaining outstanding salaries for the current fiscal year, and for training, brochure printing, and video development and production which will take place during the next budget period. In addition, the balance of the unused salary funds were rolled to the following year to cover counselor salaries that are higher on average than anticipated at the time the grant proposal was written.



## EVALUATION OF PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Both cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses are planned over the three-year period of the grant. In the initial year, data were gathered from the twelve target schools that were supported by grant counselors as well as from five comparison schools. Extensive data, including discipline incidents; detailed accounts of how counselors spent their time, including the extent of classroom guidance delivery and the numbers of group and individual counseling sessions conducted by counselors (Appendix B); teacher assessments of student competencies in target curriculum strands (Appendix C); teacher surveys (Appendix D); and student focus groups (Appendix E) were assessed in light of the three project objectives:

- Increase the number of students receiving preventative guidance and counseling services;
- Decrease the need for crisis intervention; and
- Create an environment conducive to learning through increased perceptions of safety on campuses.

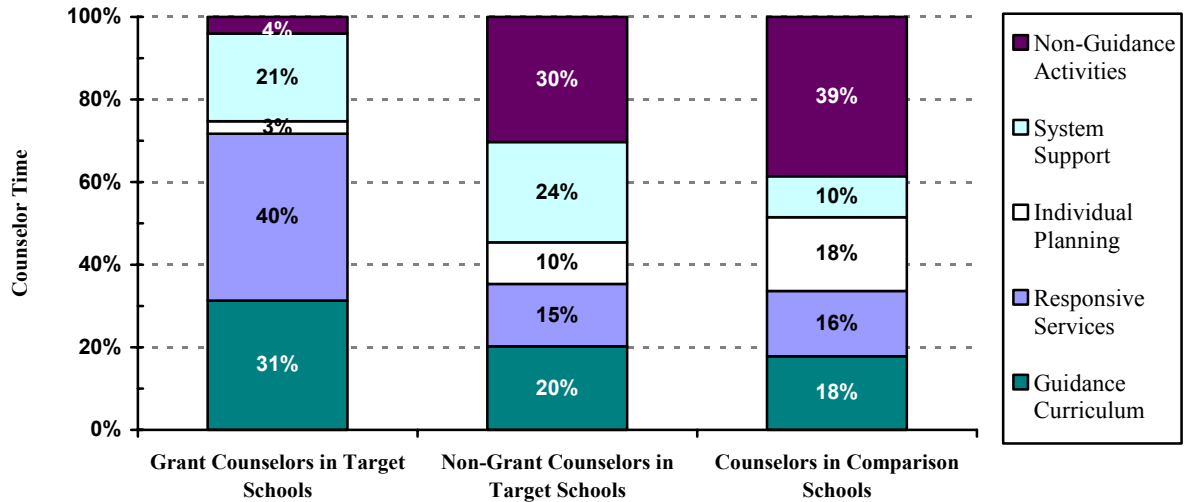
Provision of additional counselors at the target schools has most clearly demonstrated success in the first year of implementation by definitively increasing student exposure to preventative guidance and counseling services. In addition, there is some evidence that a decreased need for crisis intervention and the creation of an environment conducive to learning are benefits realized at campuses where additional counseling staff are available to students.

### **OBJECTIVE 1: INCREASE NUMBER OF STUDENTS RECEIVING PREVENTIVE GUIDANCE & COUNSELING SERVICES.**

Because the first objective of the grant was to increase the number of students exposed to preventative guidance and counseling services, grant counselors were excluded from administrative assignments and limited to only performing tasks that were related to providing direct services to students and their families. As a result of this restriction, analysis of counselors' Time and Task Logs revealed that, on average, grant counselors spent the majority of their time in direct service activities, and only 4% in "non-guidance" activities (Figure 1). This is a much greater proportion of counselor time in direct service than that provided by either the non-grant counselors in the target schools or the counselors at the comparison schools. Unsurprisingly, grant counselors provided the greatest average

weekly number of classroom guidance lessons (Table 1) as well as conducted the greatest average weekly number of individual and group counseling sessions (Table 2).

Figure 1: Relative Use of Counselor Time Across Service Categories by Type of Counselor and Category of School, 2001-2002



Source: Guidance and Counseling Time and Task Analysis Logs, 2001-2002

However, adopting the particular strategy of preventing grant counselors from conducting administrative tasks risked that, given the additional resource to fulfill counseling duties, principals might redistribute tasks, resulting in non-grant counselors at the target schools being assigned to an even greater proportion of administrative responsibilities. At best, it was expected that the non-grant counselors' time and task analysis would be similar to that of the counselors in the comparison schools. Interestingly, while the non-grant counselors' average proportion of time spent in different types of service is similar to that of the counselors in comparison schools (Figure 1), their classroom guidance delivery is more similar to that of the grant counselors (Table 1). Contrary to expectations, despite time allocations, there was somewhat of a "spill-over" effect in which non-grant counselors at target schools also provided more direct services to students. This is evidenced by their provision of nearly as many classroom guidance lessons on average per week as those provided by the grant counselors (Table 1), as well as a few more counseling sessions per week on average than those provided by counselors at comparison schools (Table 2).

Therefore, increasing the counseling staff at target campuses by the addition of one half-time counselor provided the resources for five times as many guidance lessons (21 vs. 4), nine times the number of group sessions (9 vs. 1), and three times as many individual

counseling sessions (15 vs. 5) on average per week at target schools as at comparison schools. On average, six times as many students at target schools (379 vs. 66) received direct services from counselors every week. It is possible that counselors at the target schools are dividing up their work such that the grant counselors are doing more of the preparation required to plan classroom guidance lessons, as is allowed by their job descriptions, while the non-grant counselors attend to administrative tasks; then, they are both able to present the prepared lessons. It is also possible that having grant counselors on target school campuses who were exclusively dedicated to direct services contributed to shifts in philosophy and priorities regarding guidance and counseling services at those campuses.

Table 1: Classroom Guidance Lesson Delivery by Type of Counselor and School, 2001-2002

Weekly Average Number of...	Target Schools			Counselors in Comparison Schools
	Grant Counselors	Non-Grant Counselors	Total	
<b>Conflict Management Classroom Guidance Lessons</b>	6	5	11	<1
<b>Responsible Behavior Classroom Guidance Lessons</b>	5	3	8	<1
<b>Classroom Guidance Lessons (All Topics)</b>	11	10	21	4
<b>Students Exposed to Classroom Guidance Lessons</b>	187	192	379	66

Source: Guidance and Counseling Time and Task Analysis Logs, 2001-2002

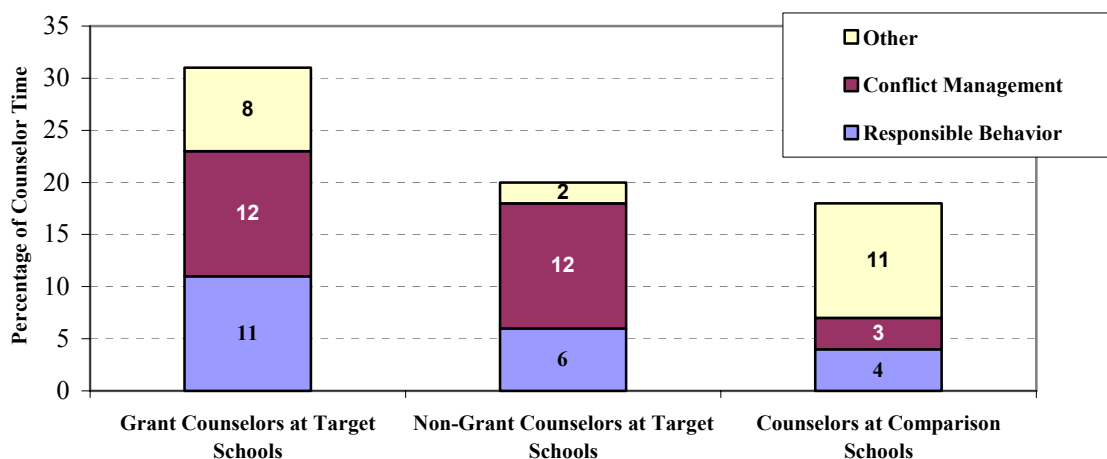
Table 2: Student Exposure to Counseling by Type of Counselor and School, 2001-2002

Weekly Average Number of...	Target Schools			Counselors in Comparison Schools
	Grant Counselors	Non-Grant Counselors	Total	
<b>Group Sessions Conducted</b>	7	2	9	1
<b>Students Exposed to Groups</b>	25	8	33	5
<b>Individual Sessions</b>	8	7	15	5

Source: Guidance and Counseling Time and Task Analysis Logs, 2001-2002

Because the Elementary School Counseling Demonstration Program is funded by the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program through the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education at the U.S. Department of Education, it was decided that a particular emphasis would be placed on providing guidance and counseling services that are conducive to drug and violence prevention. As a result, target elementary schools focused on two strands of the *Live This!* guidance curriculum that best fit these goals: Responsible Behavior and Conflict Management. In addition, the Responsible Behavior curriculum strand was made a priority at all elementary schools in AISD for 2001-2002. Both grant and non-grant counselors at target schools spent a much greater proportion of their time in the two targeted curriculum strands (Figure 2). While this is primarily a reflection of how much time was spent in curriculum overall by counselors at target versus comparison schools, those at target schools also spent the majority of their curriculum time on Responsible Behavior and Conflict Management, while those at the comparison schools spent more of their total time on the other six curriculum strands.

Figure 2: Percentage of Time Spent in Curriculum Strands by Type of Counselor and School, 2001-2002



Source: Guidance and Counseling Time and Task Analysis Logs, 2001-2002

As may be expected because it was the emphasized curriculum strand districtwide, a survey of teachers (Appendix D) revealed that those at both target and comparison schools most frequently reported that guidance lessons in the area of Responsible Behavior were conducted by counselors in their classrooms (Table 3). In addition, teachers reported guidance lessons in the area of Conflict Management to be second most common at target

schools and third at comparison schools. Concurring with counselor reports regarding prevalence of guidance lessons, teachers at target schools were significantly less likely to report that “no lessons” were conducted in their classrooms, and were more likely to report that each of the nine curriculum strands topics were presented by counselors in their classrooms.

Table 3: Teacher Reported Frequency and Topics of Classroom Guidance Lessons in Target and Comparison Elementary Schools, 2001-2002

Guidance Curriculum Strand Topics	Percentage of Teachers Reporting Topic was Covered by Classroom Guidance Lessons	
	Target Schools (n=174 teachers)	Comparison Schools (n=49 teachers)
<b>Self Knowledge and Acceptance</b>	61.5%	49%
<b>Interpersonal Communication Skills*</b>	63.2%	44.9%
<b>Appreciation of Diversity</b>	36.8%	36.7%
<b>Responsible Behavior**</b>	85.1%	61.2%
<b>Conflict Resolution**</b>	83.3%	49.0%
<b>Decision Making / Problem Solving**</b>	75.3%	51.0%
<b>Motivation to Achieve</b>	24.7%	12.2%
<b>Goal Setting</b>	29.3%	16.3%
<b>Career Planning*</b>	28.2%	12.2%
<b>N/A (No Guidance Lessons were conducted by a counselor in my classroom this year)**</b>	4.6%	20.4%
<b>Average Number of Classroom Guidance Lessons Presented by Counselors in each Classroom during 2001-2002*</b>	16.6	4.95

\* Significant difference at the  $p \leq .05$  level

\*\* Significant difference at the  $p \leq .001$  level

Source: AISD Elementary Teacher Guidance and Counseling Program Survey, 2001-2002

## OBJECTIVE 2: DECREASE NEED FOR CRISIS INTERVENTION

The second objective of the grant is to show a decreased need for crisis intervention as a result of the increased direct services. Crisis intervention is evidenced by either formal or informal disciplinary actions or referrals to guidance and counseling services. Baseline

data regarding formal disciplinary actions are tabulated below (Table 4). Both the mean number of discipline offenses as reported in PEIMS and the mean number of referrals to Dill School of target and non-target schools indicate, on average, a greater number of incidents requiring crisis intervention occurring at the target schools. While this may be representative of a real difference in prevalence of incidents at target versus comparison schools, it is also possible that differences in school policies and philosophies regarding formal disciplinary actions account for some of the disparity between these groups. The *Texas School Survey of Substance Use, 2002* conducted by the Texas A&M University, examines informal disciplinary actions by asking students if they had been sent to the principal's office as a result of doing something against the rules. However, data from this survey showed no significant differences between the percentage of students reporting that

Table 4: Discipline Offenses and Dill School Referrals by School, 2001-2002

School	Number of Violent Offenses Resulting in Disciplinary Action	Total Number of PEIMS Discipline Incidents	Number Students Referred to Dill School
<b>Target Schools</b>			
Allan	37	48	64
Allison	6	10	21
Blackshear	161	183	28
Campbell	21	55	63
Govalle*	(35)	(74)	(84)
Metz	11	24	11
Ortega	27	100	97
Rodriguez	35	65	81
Sanchez	26	42	31
Sims	66	115	68
St. Elmo	7	11	4
Winn	38	59	37
Wooten	16	35	25
Zavala*	(30)	(51)	(45)
<b>Target School Mean and Range</b>	Mean: 37.58 Range: 6 to 161	Mean: 62.25 Range: 10 to 183	Mean: 44.17 Range: 4 to 81
<b>Comparison Schools</b>			
Becker	35	58	56
Dawson	7	11	10
Hart	11	14	10
Joslin	7	24	23
Reilly	1	5	5
<b>Comparison School Mean</b>	Mean: 12.2 Range: 1 to 35	Mean: 22.4 Range: 5 to 58	Mean: 20.8 Range: 5 to 56

\* Excluded from the means because there was no grant counselor hired for these schools by the end of the year.

Source: AISD Student Discipline Report, 7/26/02

Table 5: Average Number of Individual Teacher Referrals to Guidance and Counseling Services, 2001-2001

Type of Service for which Student was Referred	Target Schools	Comparison Schools
<b>Individual Counseling</b>	2.51	2.45
<b>Small Group Participation</b>	2.41	1.8
<b>Total Referrals</b>	4.92	4.25

Source: AISD Elementary Teacher Guidance and Counseling Program Survey, 2001-2002

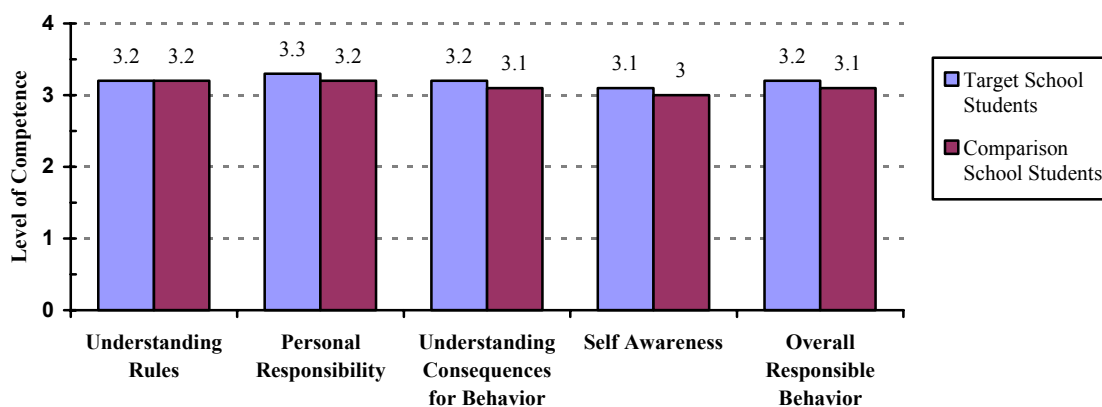
they had been sent to the principal's office at target (29.8%) and comparison (33.9%) schools<sup>\*</sup>. In addition, the average number of students that teachers reported they referred to counseling services was similar in target and comparison schools (Table 5). Therefore, mixed information regarding crisis intervention needs was evidenced from formal (e.g., referral to Dill school or PEIMS report) and informal (e.g., visits to the principal's or counselor's office) disciplinary actions. It is unclear from this information how similar or different the target and comparison school crisis intervention needs are. However, given this baseline information, discipline incidents, Dill School referrals, and counseling referrals will be assessed for change over time during the next two years of the grant. In addition, attempts will be made to access more information regarding informal disciplinary actions (e.g., school policies regarding discipline or other classroom management strategies being used).

Progress toward the goal of decreasing the need for crisis intervention is also measured through assessment of student competencies in dealing with issues that might instigate crisis. Because emphasis was placed on the Responsible Behavior and Conflict Resolution curriculum strands, each K-6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at both target and comparison elementary schools was asked to rate the competence of three randomly selected students from their classroom on the skills associated with those strands (Appendix C). A total of 210 teachers provided ratings of 614 students (473 at target and 141 at comparison schools). Students were rated on their ability to demonstrate each skill on a scale of 1 to 4 (1=not at all, 2=occasionally, 3=most of the time, and 4=consistently). The differences between students at target and comparison schools on skill competencies associated with

<sup>\*</sup> Eleven of the fourteen target schools (n=620) and three of the five comparison schools (n=124) were represented in the *Texas School Survey of Substance Use, 2002*.

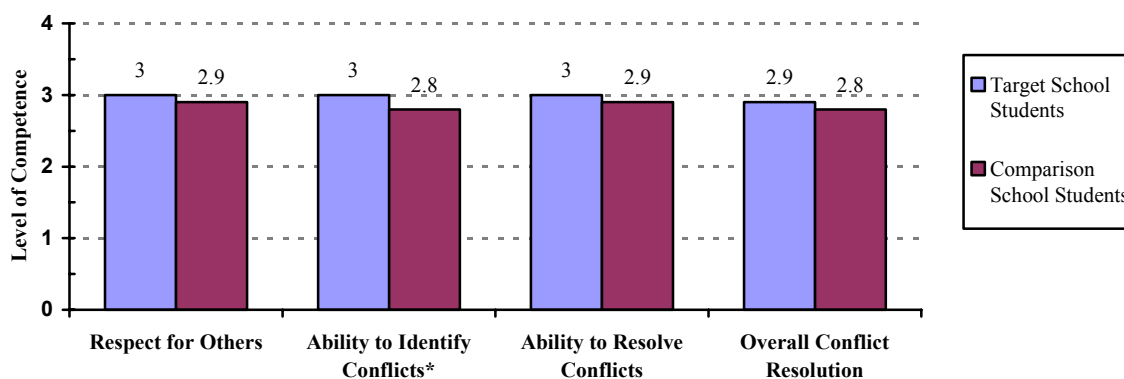
the Responsible Behavior (Figure 3) and Conflict Resolution (Figure 4) curriculum strands were only significant in the skill area of “Identifying Conflicts” ( $p < .05$ ). However, a consistent pattern emerged in which, on average, children at target schools were rated as being slightly more competent than children at comparison schools in each skill. In addition, the average score across all skills associated with each strand, i.e., the “overall” rating, also exhibits a trend toward greater student competence at the target schools (Figures 2 and 3). This may be preliminary evidence of the initial effects on target school students of having, on average, a greater amount of guidance and counseling services (i.e., classroom guidance lessons and group and individual counseling) provided to them than were provided to comparison school students each week.

Figure 3: Mean Student Competence on Responsible Behavior at Target and Comparison Schools, 2001-2002



Target School n=473; Comparison School n=141.  
Source: *Live This!* Student Evaluation, 2002

Figure 4: Mean Student Competence on Conflict Resolution at Target and Comparison Schools, 2001-2002



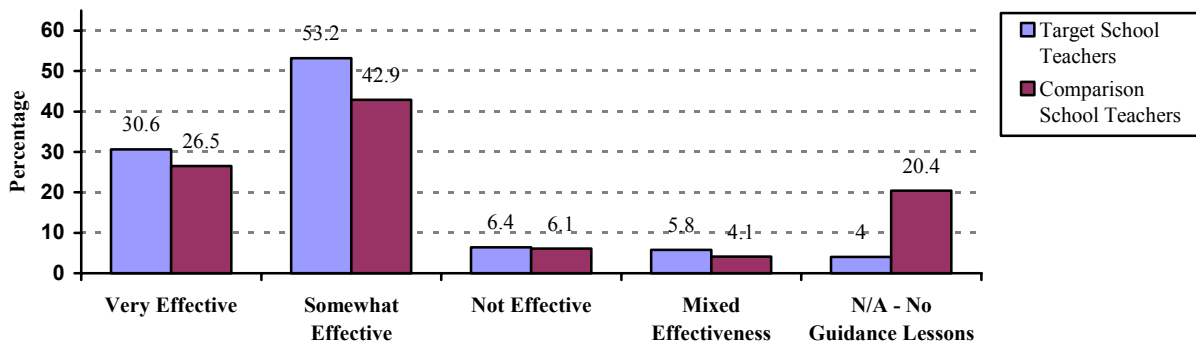
\* Significantly different ( $p < .05$ )  
Target School n=473; Comparison School n=141.  
Source: *Live This!* Student Evaluation, 2002



**OBJECTIVE 3: INCREASE STAFF AND STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY, CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCTIVE TO LEARNING.**

The final objective of increasing perceptions of safety was assessed through teacher surveys (Appendix D). The majority of teachers from both target and comparison schools reported that guidance lessons were at least “somewhat effective,” and over 30% and 26%, respectively, found the lessons to be “very effective” (Figure 5). In addition, a large proportion of teachers from both target and comparison schools reported that they observed either temporary (40.7% and 34% respectively) or lasting (14% and 12.8% respectively) changes in student behavior following classroom guidance lessons (Figure 6). Effective guidance lessons that contribute to changes in student behavior are an important element of creating a school environment that is conducive to learning. More frequent visits to classrooms by counselors at target schools may provide more opportunities for reinforcement of lessons and contribute to the greater percentage of teachers at those schools who considered lessons to be more effective.

Figure 5: Teacher Perceptions of Guidance Lesson Effectiveness, 2001-2002



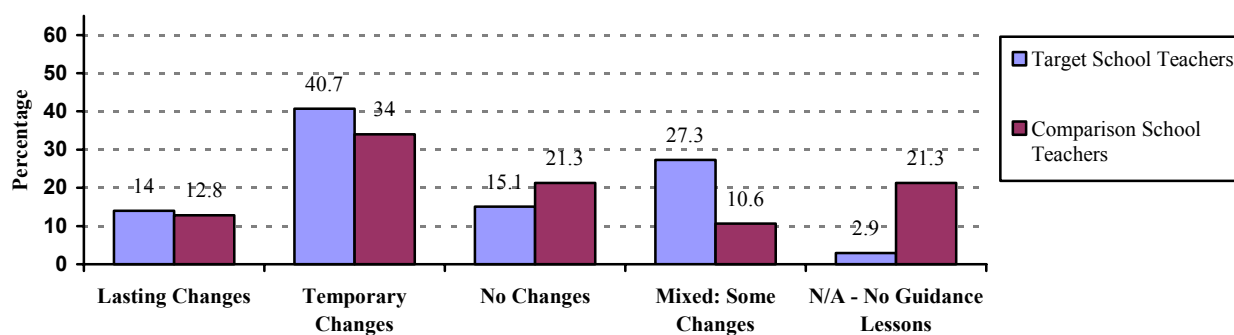
Target school n=174; Comparison School n=49

Source: AISD Elementary Teacher Guidance and Counseling Program Survey, 2001-2002

In addition, in conjunction with the Title IV Advisory Council activities, focus groups were conducted at selected campuses across the district to assess student perceptions of safety and the prevalence of substance use (Appendix E). Because only two schools from this group were included in the elementary sample (1 from the target group and 1 from the comparison group), generalizations regarding differences cannot be made. However, there were some similarities in what students observed to be problematic at their campuses and suggestions they made for improvements regarding safety. Specifically, students at both campuses observed incidents of bullying on campus; some pointed out that this was based on size, differences (e.g., race), and jealousy, and others noted that hallways

and bathrooms were areas in which the bullying typically took place. At one of the schools, most students felt that they could talk to teachers or counselors about drug and safety issues; however, at the other school, students were mixed on their willingness to talk to school personnel. Students at both campuses were aware of many anti-drug activities that had taken place over the year. In order to make them feel more safe at school, students at both schools requested more locks to keep strangers away (e.g., higher fences, locked doors, student keys and ID badges, etc.) and greater monitoring by adults (parents, teachers, crossing guards, etc.).

Figure 6: Teacher Perceptions of Changes in Student Behavior Following Guidance Lessons, 2001-2002



Target school n=174; Comparison School n=49

Source: AISD Elementary Teacher Guidance and Counseling Program Survey, 2001-2002

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Provision of an extra half time counselor in each of the target schools vastly increased the number of students receiving preventative guidance and counseling services at those campuses. While evidence regarding the need for crisis intervention was mixed, the trend toward greater student competence in the skills associated with Responsible Behavior and Conflict Management may contribute to a decreased need for crisis intervention in the future. Finally, evidence that teachers at both target and comparison schools view guidance lessons as at least “somewhat effective” and observed some changes in student behavior, suggests that providing increased classroom guidance may be one effective means for creating an environment conducive to learning. Increased counseling staff and prioritization of counselors’ duties (to focus on their area of specialty, rather than administrative tasks) shows initial promise in providing the resources necessary to accomplish this goal.

The recent call for greater accountability in education has put increased pressure on programs that are sometimes considered outside the realm of academic impact to justify their existence. Demonstrating the value of improved elementary counseling service delivery at AISD through full implementation of this grant can help the district reach it’s vision of “...providing every student with an excellent education” through actions that both reflect and incorporate two of it’s core values; respect for individuals and provision of resources to support students.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Once grant leadership stabilized and counseling staff were hired, counselors at target schools were able to provide more direct guidance services at target schools as a result of their additional part-time counselor. Now, to continue making progress on the grant goals, focus must shift from first-year concerns, such as hiring and training staff, to full implementation of the guidance program at the grant schools. Following are several specific steps to accomplish this objective:

- Focus on meeting all student needs and reaching as many students as possible by providing preventative services (e.g., classroom guidance) to the greatest number of students, intermediate level responsive services (e.g., groups) to fewer students, and intensive (i.e., individual) services to only those students with the greatest needs;

- Further develop the Live This! curriculum. For example, explore and adopt more targeted tools for teaching each curriculum strand, better link curriculum objectives and student competencies, and align Guidance and Counseling curriculum with academic curriculum;
- Increase “long-term” improvements in student behavior by providing teachers with the tools and skills to reinforce guidance lessons in their own classrooms;
- Provide supplemental staff training to support grant program goals, as planned.

**APPENDIX A:  
TITLE IV ADVISORY COUNCIL  
ELEMENTARY GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SUBCOMMITTEE**

<u>Member</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Shayna Feldman	Middle School Coordinator
Stan Brein	Title IV Grant Manager
Dana Delgado	DOE Grant Counselor
D'Aun Knighten	Program Director for Austin Boys & Girls Club
JoAnn Farrell	Elementary Counselor
Cinda Christian	Title IV and Elementary Counseling Grant Evaluator
Mary Sondgeroth	Director of Guidance and Counseling
Sally Firestone	Elementary guidance specialist

\* efforts are being made to recruit more community members into this subcommittee

## APPENDIX B: GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING TIME ACCOUNTING LOGS

AISD Guidance & Counseling Daily Time and Task Analysis Log  
 Counselor Name \_\_\_\_\_ School No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time	Activity	Guidance Curriculum	Responsive Services (Group)	Responsive Services (Individual)	Individual Planning	System Support	Non-Guidance Activities	# of students involved	# of parents involved	# of others involved
7:30-8:00										
8:00-8:30										
8:30-9:00										
9:00-9:30										
9:30-10:00										
10:00-10:30										
10:30-11:00										
11:00-11:30										
11:30-12:00										
12:00-12:30										
12:30-1:00										
1:00-1:30										
1:30-2:00										
2:00-2:30										
2:30-3:00										
3:00-3:30										
3:30-4:00										
4:00-4:30										
4:30-5:00										
5:00-5:30										
<b>Daily TOTAL:</b>										

Summary by types of Services

Week	Month	Number of Groups that Met	Number of children served in Groups	Number of Classroom Lessons	Number of children served in Classrooms Lessons	Number of children that were served in individual sessions
	Jan 7-11, 2002					
	Jan 14-18, 2002					
	Jan 21-25, 2002					
	Jan 28-Feb 1, 2002					
	January 2002					
	Feb 4-8, 2002					
	Feb 11-15, 2002					
	Feb 18-22, 2002					
	Feb 25-Mar 1, 2002					
	February 2002					
	March 4-8, 2002					
	March 11-15, 2002					
	March 18-22, 2002					
	March 25-29, 2002					
	March 2002					
	April 1-5, 2002					
	April 8-12, 2002					
	April 15-19, 2002					
	April 22-26, 2002					
	April 2002					
	April 29-May 3, 2002					
	May 6-10, 2002					
	May 13-17, 2002					
	May 20-24, 2002					
	May 2002					
	Semester Total					

## AISD Guidance &amp; Counseling Summary Time and Task Analysis Log

Counselor Name \_\_\_\_\_ School No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

	RB	CM	Other	Guidance Curriculum	Responsive Services (Group)	Responsive Services (Individual)	Individual Planning	System Support	Non-Guidance Activities	# of students involved	# of parents involved	# of others involved
Jan 7-11, 2002												
Jan 14-18, 2002												
Jan 21-25, 2002												
Jan 28-Feb 1, 2002												
<b>January 2002</b>												
Feb 4-8, 2002												
Feb 11-15, 2002												
Feb 18-22, 2002												
Feb 25-Mar 1, 2002												
<b>February 2002</b>												
March 4-8, 2002												
March 11-15, 2002												
March 18-22, 2002												
March 25-29, 2002												
<b>March 2002</b>												
April 1-5, 2002												
April 8-12, 2002												
April 15-19, 2002												
April 22-26, 2002												
<b>April 2002</b>												

Continued on back →



	Guidance Curriculum			Responsive Services (Group)	Responsive Services (Individual)	Individual Planning	System Support	Non-Guidance Activities	# of <b>students</b> involved	# of <b>parents</b> involved	# of <b>others</b> involved
	RB	CM	Other								
	April 29-May 3, 2002										
	May 6-10, 2002										
	May 13-17, 2002										
May 20-24, 2002											
May 2002											
Semester Total											

### APPENDIX C: 2002 LIVE THIS! STUDENT EVALUATION FORM

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the response that best describes this student's abilities. Do your best to be as objective as possible. Some of the earlier skills may be necessary before a child will be able to master those further down the list in each area. It is NOT expected that children of all ages should be competent at all of these skills. Please use the following criteria:

Not at All - This student does not demonstrate this skill.

Occasionally - This student can sometimes perform this skill.

Most of the Time - This student performs this skill most, but not all, of the time.

Consistently - This student consistently performs this skill without prompting.

N/A - I have had no opportunity to observe this skill in this student

This student:	NOT AT ALL	Occasionally	Most of the Time	Consistently	N/A
<b><u>Responsible Behavior/Personal Responsibility:</u></b>					
<b>1. Demonstrates age-appropriate understanding of rules:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>N/A</b>
a. can identify the rules he or she follows at school.	1	2	3	4	N/A
b. can describe the necessity of having school rules	1	2	3	4	N/A
c. can relate the impact of following rules to group effectiveness	1	2	3	4	N/A
d. can relate the impact of following rules to personal success	1	2	3	4	N/A
e. can use knowledge of school rules and expectations when faced with choices that could interfere with learning	1	2	3	4	N/A
f. can evaluate rules in the school	1	2	3	4	N/A
<b>2. Demonstrates age-appropriate personal responsibility:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>N/A</b>
a. can describe ways he or she takes care of him/herself.	1	2	3	4	N/A
b. can describe the responsibilities he or she has at school	1	2	3	4	N/A
d. can describe necessary daily activities carried out by others.	1	2	3	4	N/A
e. can recognize that people have varying roles	1	2	3	4	N/A
f. can describe his/her own roles	1	2	3	4	N/A
g. knows his/her responsibilities	1	2	3	4	N/A
h. can be trusted to do his/her responsibilities	1	2	3	4	N/A

	NOT AT ALL	Occasionally	Most of the Time	Consistently	N/A
This student:					
<b>3. Demonstrates age-appropriate understanding of consequences for behavior</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>N/A</b>
a. can state positive consequences of behavior.	1	2	3	4	N/A
b. can state negative consequences of behavior.	1	2	3	4	N/A
c. can predict consequences for various behavior choices	1	2	3	4	N/A
d. can evaluate the effect of his/her responsibilities on him/herself	1	2	3	4	N/A
e. can evaluate the effect of his/her responsibilities on others	1	2	3	4	N/A
<b>4. Demonstrates age-appropriate self-awareness</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>N/A</b>
a. can describe situations where he or she has no control, some control, or almost total control over him/herself	1	2	3	4	N/A
b. can use behavior that demonstrates respect for the feelings of others	1	2	3	4	N/A
c. can use behavior that demonstrates respect for the property of others	1	2	3	4	N/A
d. can use behavior that demonstrates respect for the interests of others	1	2	3	4	N/A
e. can demonstrate effective self-control	1	2	3	4	N/A
f. can analyze how growing up requires more self control	1	2	3	4	N/A

Additional comments regarding Responsible Behavior/Personal Responsibility:

	NOT AT ALL	Occasionally	Most of the Time	Consistently	N/A
This student:					
<b>Conflict Resolution:</b>					
<b>5. Demonstrates age-appropriate respect for others</b>	1	2	3	4	N/A
a. interacts with others in ways that show caring for them.	1	2	3	4	N/A
b. interacts with others in ways that show respect for them.	1	2	3	4	N/A
c. can give compliments	1	2	3	4	N/A
d. can receive compliments	1	2	3	4	N/A
e. can encourage others	1	2	3	4	N/A
f. can predict how his/her behavior affects relationships	1	2	3	4	N/A
g. is aware of issues involved with trust	1	2	3	4	N/A
h. is aware of issues involved with neutrality	1	2	3	4	N/A
i. is aware of issues involved with confidentiality	1	2	3	4	N/A
<b>6. Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to identify conflicts</b>	1	2	3	4	N/A
a. can describe the elements of a conflict	1	2	3	4	N/A
b. can identify feelings associated with conflict	1	2	3	4	N/A
c. can give reasons for conflicts	1	2	3	4	N/A
d. can identify behaviors that make a conflict escalate	1	2	3	4	N/A
e. can identify behaviors that make a conflict de-escalate	1	2	3	4	N/A
f. can identify "win-win" results of conflict	1	2	3	4	N/A
g. can identify "win-lose" results of conflict	1	2	3	4	N/A
h. can identify "lose-lose" results of conflict	1	2	3	4	N/A
i. can identify different points of view					
<b>7. Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to resolve conflicts</b>	1	2	3	4	N/A
a. can listen while another student describes a conflict.	1	2	3	4	N/A
b. can brainstorm possible solutions for conflicts	1	2	3	4	N/A
c. can evaluate possible solutions for conflicts	1	2	3	4	N/A
d. can demonstrate active listening skills	1	2	3	4	N/A
e. can distinguish when to ask for help in resolving conflicts	1	2	3	4	N/A

Additional comments regarding Conflict Resolution (continue on back if necessary):

**APPENDIX D:**

**AISD Office of Program Evaluation**  
**2002 Elementary Teacher Guidance and Counseling Program**  
**Survey**

The information you provide on this survey is anonymous and will be used to assess campus needs and to make guidance program improvements. Please answer the following questions in reference to the 2001-2002 school year.

1. How many students (if any) have you referred to a school counselor for individual counseling? \_\_\_\_
2. How many students (if any) have you referred to a school counselor for small group participation? \_\_\_\_
3. How many classroom guidance lessons have been conducted by a school counselor in your classroom this year (if any)? \_\_\_\_
4. What topics were covered by the counselor in the guidance lessons? (check all that apply)  
  
\_\_\_\_ a. Self-knowledge and acceptance  
\_\_\_\_ b. Interpersonal communication skills  
\_\_\_\_ c. Appreciation of diversity  
\_\_\_\_ d. Responsible behavior  
\_\_\_\_ e. Conflict resolution  
\_\_\_\_ f. Decision making/problem solving  
\_\_\_\_ g. Motivation to achieve  
\_\_\_\_ h. Goal setting  
\_\_\_\_ i. Career planning  
\_\_\_\_ j. N/A (No guidance sessions were conducted by a counselor in my room this year)
5. In general, how effective do you think these guidance sessions were? (check the answer that best fits)  
  
\_\_\_\_ a. Very effective  
\_\_\_\_ b. Somewhat effective  
\_\_\_\_ c. Not effective  
\_\_\_\_ d. Mixed (some sessions were effective, others were not). Please specify:  
effective sessions: \_\_\_\_\_  
ineffective sessions: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ e. N/A (No guidance sessions were conducted by a counselor in my room this year)

6. Did you notice changes in the student's behaviors following the guidance sessions?

(check the answer that best fits)

- ☐ a. Yes, I noticed lasting changes in student behavior.
- ☐ b. Yes, I noticed temporary changes in student behavior.
- ☐ c. No, student behavior did not change.
- ☐ d. Mixed, some guidance lessons resulted in changes in student behavior, while others did not.
- ☐ e. N/A (No guidance sessions were conducted by a counselor in my room this year)

7. What have you done to reinforce the guidance lessons presented by the counselor?

8. What do you think worked well in the guidance lessons?

9. How would you improve the guidance lessons?

10. What (additional) types of lessons would be beneficial to your class?

11. Have you referred any students for individual or small group counseling in the past year?

- ☐ a. Yes, I referred at least one student to individual counseling this year.
- ☐ b. Yes, I referred at least one student to small group counseling this year.
- ☐ c. Yes, I referred students to both individual and small group counseling this year.
- ☐ d. No, I have not referred any students to individual or small group counseling this year.

12. If you did refer students to either individual or small group counseling, what changes did you observe in the students' behavior?
13. How many times in an average week do you experience a disruption in your classroom that is serious enough to interrupt your lesson and/or to disrupt the learning of students that are not directly involved in the disruption? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions about the effectiveness of the Guidance and Counseling Program at your school?

☺ Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey!!

**APPENDIX E:  
STUDENT FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS**

Questions for Elementary Students

1. What does it mean to feel safe?
2. Do you feel safe at school? Why/why not?
3. Is everybody safe? Do some kids get "picked on" or "bullied" at school?
4. Can you talk to someone at school about these things? Who?
5. Is there anywhere at school you feel especially safe? Unsafe?
6. What helps you to feel safe?
7. What can we do to help you to feel safe?
8. What would you do to help make your school safer?
9. Do you think there are drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes at your school?
10. Can you talk to someone at school about these things? Who?
11. What does your school do to help kids be less likely to use drugs and alcohol?
12. What else would you do to help kids be less likely to use drugs and alcohol?



**AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Division of Accountability and Information Systems**

Joy McLarty, Ph.D.

**Office of Program Evaluation**

Holly Williams, Ph.D.

**Author**

Cinda L. Christian, Ph.D.



**Board of Trustees**

Doyle Valdez, President

Ingrid Taylor, Vice President

Ave Wahrmond, Secretary

Cheryl Bradley

Johna Edwards

John Fitzpatrick

Rudy Montoya, Jr.

Robert Schneider

Patricia Whiteside

**Superintendent of Schools**

Pascal D. Forgione, Jr., Ph.D.

Front cover graphic used by permission of [DiscoverySchool.com](http://DiscoverySchool.com)